

# A NAME FOR A WELL-KNOWN MEXICAN SPECIES OF *IRESINE* (AMARANTHACEAE)

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## ABSTRACT

The earlier and correct name for what has been called *Iresine grandis* Standl. actually is *I. cassiniiformis* Schauer. The species to which the latter name has been misapplied is recognized here as *I. orientalis*, sp. nov. *Iresine orientalis* is known from the mountains of Tamaulipas, Nuevo León, San Luis Potosí, Querétaro, and Hidalgo; its closest relative is *I. discolor* Greenm. from Oaxaca and Puebla.

The type specimen of *Iresine cassiniiformis* Schauer represents a species that has been identified by the much more recent name, *I. grandis* Standl. The very distinctive plants heretofore known in most herbaria as *I. cassiniiformis* (see Standley 1922) are named for the first time below.

**IRESINE orientalis** Nesom, sp. nov.

Differt a *I. discolor* Greenm. foliis fuscioribus (schistaceis) tenerioribus angustioribus spicis pedunculatis elongatis sepalis staminalibus oblongi-ellipticis.

Erect dioecious shrubs 0.6–1.5 m tall. Stems densely pubescent in area of inflorescence, glabrescent below. Leaves ovate to ovate-lanceolate with rounded to acute, apiculate apices, 3–10(-12.5) cm long, 1.3–6 cm wide, thick, usually with depressed veins above, somewhat rugose, short-pubescent above to glabrescent and smooth with age, densely woolly below with conspicuously whitish hairs, the hairs very short, never silky or long enough to appear "combed" (all oriented in the same direction). Panicles somewhat open, sometimes arching or drooping; spikes sessile or very short-pedicellate. Staminate and pistillate bracts scarious, glabrous; sepals 1-nerved, staminate oblong-elliptic, 2–2.2 mm long, glabrous or very sparsely short-pilose, pistillate broadly ovate-elliptic, 1.2–1.5 mm long, densely long-pilose over whole surface but longest hairs arising from the base. Utricles 1.1–1.3 mm long; seeds shiny golden-brown.

TYPE: MÉXICO. NUEVO LEÓN: Monterrey, 17-26 Feb 1980, *E. Palmer 1133* (HOLOTYPE: US!; ISOTYPE: US!).

Representative specimens examined: MÉXICO. HIDALGO: slopes and summits of Cerro de las Canteras, near Puerto de San Pedro, KM 104 on hwy from Pachuca to Actopan, 2500–2700 m, 9 Oct 1946, *Moore 1385* (US); NUEVO LEÓN: on cliffs, Sierra Madre above Monterrey, 750 m, 4 Apr 1906, *Pringle 13728* (US); ca 24 km SW of Galeana, waterway below Alamar, ca 1350–1500 m, common in the open wood, 30 May 1934, *C. H. and M. T. Mueller 631* (US); QUERÉTARO: ca 80 km NE of Querétaro, lower limit of piñon-juniper belt in dry mts. above Pilón on

road to Pinal de Amoles, ca 2700 m, 24 Apr 1949, *McVaugh* 10365 (US); TAMAULIPAS: 13 km S of Cd. Victoria along rte. 70, 7 Apr 1961, *King* 4525 (US); vicinity of Victoria, ca 320 m, 1 Feb–9 Apr 1907, *Palmer* 203 (US); Victoria, common on mountainside, 800 m, 23 Mar 1925, *Runyon* 797 (US).

A feature that distinguishes *Iresine orientalis* from nearly all of its Mexican congeners is the lack of any pubescence on the floral bracts, both staminate and pistillate. *Iresine orientalis* also can be separated from sympatric plants of the *I. calea* (Ibañez) Standl. group by its thick, subrugose leaves with conspicuously white abaxial pubescence of relatively short trichomes that appear woolly or sometimes densely tufted. Corresponding pubescence of the *I. calea* group is yellowish or tawny and of long hairs that are usually pilose and often all oriented in the same direction.

*Iresine discolor* Greenm. appears to be the closest relative of *I. orientalis*; it has a similar habit, leaves with dense, white abaxial pubescence of short hairs, and strong similarities between the flowers. The leaves of *I. discolor*, however, are darker, thinner, narrower, more elliptic, and more pubescent above, and the staminate sepals of this species are triangular, compared to the oblong-elliptic ones of *I. orientalis*; also, as pointed out by Standley (1922), the spikes of *I. discolor* are nearly all pedunculate and elongate (vs. sessile and short in *I. orientalis*). Finally, the two species appear to be allopatric, as *I. discolor* is known only from Puebla and Oaxaca.

The match of the type of *Iresine cassiniiformis* with other plants of the species (synonym = *I. grandis*) is clear. It also appears to be at least a duplicate of the collection originally cited by Schauer, one made by Alwin Aschenborn from south central Mexico in about 1842. I have found no indication that a type of this species has ever been examined since the original publication. However, until my study of Aschenborn and his Mexican collections (in prep.) is complete, I will refer to this sheet simply as a type without specifying whether it should serve as holotype or isotype: *Iresine cassiniiformis* Schauer, *Linnaea* 19:709. 1847; Mexico, no other collection data, *Aschenborn* 691 (WRSL!). The original publication cited *Aschenborn* 169 as the collection number, but the sheet reads 691. The type of *Senecio schumannianus* Schauer is also marked *Aschenborn* 691; nevertheless, I have still cited the number as it appears on the *Iresine* sheet, although a labelling error may have been involved. An indication that the WRSL sheet probably may not have been the holotype is that the specimen is pistillate, while the original description mentioned only stamens. *Aschenborn* 617 and 618 were also cited by Schauer as representative of *I. cassiniiformis*, but I have not seen these sheets.

Standley and Steyermark (1946) observed that *Iresine cassiniiformis* (as *I. grandis*) has been reported from Guatemala under the name *I. canescens* Humb. & Bonpl. ex Willd. (*Sp. Pl.* 4:765. 1806.), and I have seen annotations to the same effect. However, the original description of *I. canescens* noted "panicula ramosa diffusa" in sharp contrast to the ex-

tremely dense inflorescences of *I. cassiniiformis*. *Iresine canescens* is probably part of the *I. calea* group and is one of the oldest (and currently unused) names available among those taxa.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was made possible by Herbarium WRSL in Wroclaw, Poland, through a loan of type specimens collected by Alwin Aschenborn. I am also grateful for the opportunity to study specimens at US. Dr. James Mears pointed out the probable true identity of the type of *I. cassiniiformis*.

#### REFERENCES

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\_\_\_\_\_ and J. A. STEYERMARK. 1946. *Iresine*. Fieldiana: Bot. 24: 166–172.